TELEPHONE DISCUSSION NOTES

DATE: May 1, 2006

TIME: 12:15 pm

BY: Chris Tomichek

PROJECT: Mt. Tom 316(b)

TALKED WITH: Julie Crocker

Chris Tomichek, Senior Fisheries Biologist from Kleinschmidt Associates called Julie Crocker of National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) as a result of EPA comments on Mt. Tom Generating Station, NPDES Permit No. MA00053339, Proposal For Information Collection (PIC) dated April 12, 2006. The call was to discuss potential impingement and entrainment issues related to the endangered shortnose sturgeon.

Subsequent to the submittal of the draft PIC for EPA review, two shortnose sturgeon were documented impinged at the Mt. Tom intake. A shortnose sturgeon was found dead in the screen wash water trough at the Mount Tom Station in Holyoke Massachusetts on October 20, 2005. The fish weighed 5.2 lbs. and was 28" long. There were no obvious tags on the fish. The Connecticut River was flowing at about 58,000 cfs when the fish was found (USGS Montague Gage data). In the two weeks preceding the impingement event the Connecticut River has been in extreme flood stage and ranged from 2,300 cfs on October 7 to 121,000 cfs on October 9. The river has averaged between 50,000 to 60,000 from October 9 to October 31 and around 30,000 cfs in early November. On November 10, a second shortnose sturgeon was impinged at Mount Tom. Station This fish was alive and was immediately returned to the water.

Both of these impingement events were immediately reported to NMFS. NMFS staff concluded that these were unusual events caused by the atypical flow patterns in the Connecticut River. Other then these two fish, there has been no impingement of shortnose sturgeon ever reported at the Mount Tom Station.

NMFS staff was not concerned with entrainment issues at the Mount Tom Station. Evidence for many years of studies by Dr. Boyd Kynard from the USGS Conte Anadromous Fish Lab demonstrates that shortnose sturgeon spawn about 20 miles upstream in Montague, MA. The sturgeon eggs are demersal and adhesive and larval dispersion is not far downstream from the spawning ground. Thus the consensus was that shortnose sturgeon egg and larval entrainment was not an issue at this facility.

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